

**UNITED STATES SKI AND SNOWBOARD ASSOCIATION**

**ALPINE OFFICIALS' MANUAL**

**CHAPTER II**

**THE SUPERSTRUCTURE OF SKI RACING**

**05-06**

OVERVIEW .....	II/ 2/05-06
FIS BUREAU .....	II/ 2/05-06
UNITED STATES SKI AND SNOWBOARD ASSOCIATION.....	II/ 3/05-06
BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND THE ALPINE SPORT COMMITTEE .....	II/ 3/05-06
ALPINE COMPETITION WORKING GROUPS .....	II/ 4/05-06
COMPETITION REGULATIONS .....	II/ 5/05-06
UNITED STATES SKI TEAM .....	II/ 6/05-06
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.....	II/ 6/05-06
UNITED STATES DISABLED SKI TEAM.....	II/ 7/05-06
USSA COACHES EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.....	II/ 7/05-06
ALPINE RACE SERIES .....	II/ 8/05-06
FIS POINTS AND THE SEEDING LIST .....	II/ 8/05-06
USSA ATHLETE POINTS SYSTEM.....	II/ 9/05-06
HOMOLOGATIONS AND COURSE APPROVALS.....	II/10/05-06

## OVERVIEW

There have been many changes in alpine ski racing during recent years. The International Ski Federation (FIS) has taken major steps to make management of the premier circuit - the Alpine World Cup - more professional and equal to other major sports attractions. The FIS has added an overall director for the World Cup and Men's and Women's full-time Chief Race Directors and Race Directors as well as general staff to help accomplish their goals.

The revolutionary advancements made in the design and performance of competition equipment and security measures have increased the challenges faced by the regulating bodies of alpine ski racing. *Federation Internationale de Ski* (International Ski Federation or FIS) is the international regulating body and in the United States, the United States Ski and Snowboard Association (USSA) is responsible for all disciplines at all levels and brings new opportunities and challenges to alpine ski racing.

Due to the subject matter, the material contained in this Chapter is not complete. However, much of it still can serve as a reference for some of the general relationships and descriptions of responsibilities. More complete information appears in the annual USSA Alpine Competition Guide, which is published in the fall of each competition season. Additional information can be found in the various sections of the USSA web site, <http://www.ussa.org>.

## FIS BUREAU

The *Federation Internationale de Ski*, also known as the International Ski Federation, or the FIS Bureau or merely FIS, is located in Switzerland and is the governing body for amateur ski competition around the world. The FIS is comprised of representatives from every member national federation, such as USSA, and it works closely with the International Olympic Committee and the other winter sports federations. The general information FIS web site address is <http://www.fis-ski.com>. This web site can also be accessed through a link on the USSA web site. An additional FIS web site is <ftp://ftp.fisski.ch>. This web site is where software and data for the FIS Points List and Calendar, as well as other FIS publications are available for free download and use.

The governing body of the FIS is the Congress - a biennial meeting of the officers and representatives of member nations and committees. The general structure of the FIS is determined by the Congress and is outlined in the FIS Statutes. The rules for competitions are legislated by the Congress and comprise the International Ski Competition Rules, the ICR, for alpine competition.

Between meetings of the FIS Congress, the FIS Council which is elected at each Congress and which is comprised of an Executive Committee that includes the President, Secretary General, Vice Presidents as well as other members, directs the FIS. The Council directs the Calendar Conferences, the roll of Honorary Members, special working groups and relations with other organizations. In order to deal effectively with the various technical and special questions, the FIS Congress and Council receive input from committees, subcommittees, working groups and special commissions.

## **UNITED STATES SKI AND SNOWBOARD ASSOCIATION**

The United States Ski and Snowboard Association (USSA) is the National Governing Body (NGB) for the sport of ski racing in the United States. USSA is recognized by the FIS and the U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC) as the sole sanctioning and governing federation for "Olympic-eligible" skiing in the United States. USSA manages all aspects of competitive skiing, including programs for disabled skiers, from junior development programs through the National and Olympic teams.

USSA is responsible for selecting, funding, fielding, coaching and training the teams that represent the United States in international competition. As the NGB, USSA has the obligation to provide equal opportunities and representation for all those involved in its programs.

USSA, together with the United States Ski and Snowboard Team Foundation (USSTF), provides fundraising, development, scholarship and marketing support with assistance from major gift donations, the National Ski Areas Association and major American corporations.

USSA works closely with the FIS on matters relating to ski sport and is active in integrating skiing in the Olympic movement through the USOC and ultimately, the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

USSA is one of the largest sports organizations in the United States Olympic family and is a nonprofit, privately funded entity that receives no government subsidies. It is mainly a volunteer organization with a Board of Directors that advises policy and includes technical and athletic representatives from each discipline.

USSA is comprised of staff, athletes and their families, officials, coaches and supporters. Interested individuals invest time, energy and expertise at every level from the National Board of Directors to the local ski clubs. These individuals help determine USSA policy and programs for implementation at every level.

USSA provides support for members and encourages participation by athletes, parents, professional organizers, volunteers and recreational skiers and provides benefits including event schedules, tracking of event results for National Points Lists, entry into sanctioned events and publication of educational and informational guides.

USSA manages the technical aspects of ski competition including scheduling and conduct of sanctioned events in the United States, management of appropriate eligibility and competition rules and the education of coaches and officials. It provides an equitable, professional structure of ski competition at all levels and helps assure that all competitions are fairly conducted by qualified organizers.

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND THE ALPINE SPORT COMMITTEE**

The Board of Directors of USSA, in cooperation with the President and CEO of USSA, is responsible for overall management of USSA.

The Alpine Sport Committee recommends Alpine policy Board of Directors. The Alpine Sport Committee is comprised of various subcommittees and working groups with areas of concern

ranging from Alpine Officials, Masters' competition, scheduling, ranking lists and race quotas. USSA is divided into geographic regions, each with its own sport committee structure that is responsible for activities within the region and for coordinating activities of its skiers in national events. Regional committees coordinate the activities of common interest over wide parts of the country; they are represented on the Alpine Sport Committee.

### **ALPINE COMPETITION WORKING GROUPS**

**Alpine Quotas and Selections Working Group** recommends policy regarding quotas to regional/divisional/national events and reviews entry rules and procedures for these events. It recommends policy on competitor access to seeding points and researches related issues.

**Alpine Officials' Working Group** trains and certifies officials in all categories. It works to upgrade the quality of officiating on a continuing basis and maintains and assists in the publication of a current, active roster of USSA certified officials.

**USA FIS Technical Delegate Working Group** is responsible for the management of FIS Technical Delegate functions in the United States, including recommendations for USA FIS Technical Delegate assignments to events as made by appointed divisional/regional FIS Technical Delegates, race quality control and FIS Technical Delegate education. It is responsible for USSA FIS Technical Delegate Aspirant selection and subsequent candidacy. It is also involved in Technical Delegates' matters involving Canada, including assignments and education via the "North American FIS TD Working Group." It functions in cooperation with, and provides liaison to the FIS Technical Delegate Commission and FIS Technical Delegate Working Group.

**USSA Technical Delegate Working Group** establishes standards for certification of USSA Technical Delegates through coordination with the Alpine Officials' Education Working Group. Assignment of USSA Technical Delegates to all USSA-sanctioned events is made by appointed regional/divisional/state USSA Technical Delegates.

**Alpine Officials' Education Working Group** is responsible for nationwide standardized education and training of Alpine Officials of all classifications and levels. This includes developing educational materials, coordinating and conducting seminars/clinics, preparing a comprehensive Alpine Officials' Manual and offering assistance in the field.

**Alpine Course Approval Working Group** approves courses for use in USSA-sanctioned competitions. This includes assisting ski areas with course design, competitor protection/security considerations and preparation and application for course approval. It works with the FIS representatives to homologate courses for FIS events.

**Alpine Classification Working Group** maintains the rules regulating the Athlete Points System (APS), or the USSA Alpine Seeding List/Points Lists, as a method of ranking all classified competitors. The Chairman has final authority, subject to Board of Directors' approval, to review and decide complaints or discrepancies and to redress grievances of the APS. As needed, this working group assigns projects in computer uses to its members and other interested individuals.

**Alpine Masters Working Group** governs and promotes the sport of Alpine ski racing among those 21 and older. It establishes rules and procedures, coordinates Regional/Divisional activities, and recommends policy to USSA.

In addition, there are other subcommittees and working groups, which promote the growth of USSA. Please refer to current editions of USSA publications for information concerning these groups.

### **COMPETITION REGULATIONS**

Competition regulations of USSA provide a framework in which the various programs are developed and operated. Copies of the Bylaws can be obtained by contacting USSA. The Alpine Competition Regulations (ACR) are printed in the current Alpine Competition Guide and are also available on the USSA web site.

1. Participation in USSA competitions is limited to Olympic eligible athletes. The USSA Eligibility Committee can ban competitors for violation of eligibility rules. Competitors ruled ineligible have the right to suitable hearings conducted according to established procedures of due process. The Board of Directors provides a Judicial Committee, which makes final judgment. A banned athlete is prohibited from further USSA events, and that athlete's division and all member clubs are immediately advised. Foreign competitors are certified as eligible by their national associations.
2. Competitors, coaches, officials, etc., may be sanctioned (penalized) for conduct at USSA events that is prejudicial to the sport. Sanctions may include but are not limited to reprimand, disqualification or suspension from future events. Monetary sanctions are only allowed at the FIS level. Reciprocal agreements with other countries are possible.
3. USSA shall sanction (approve) annual National Championships in all disciplines plus Junior Olympic and other national age group championships. National teams are expected to participate unless schedule conflict or specific "force majeure" prevents their participation.
4. USSA may calendar international tournaments as recognized by the FIS, and all such tournaments shall be applied for through USSA. Calendar fees for these events become the obligation of the organizers.
5. Once a sanction has been granted to an organizer for the conduct of a National Championship or an international tournament, USSA shall not schedule any conflicting event, subject to the anticipated successful conduct of the event as outlined in the Schedule Agreement.
6. USSA shall determine the qualifications of athletes for such events, subject to the regulations of the FIS. The organizers of such events must file all reports with USSA on a timely basis following the event.
7. USSA shall register all competitors in all classes as individuals or as members of clubs. An individual may represent only one club and a college or school team in one season.

8. All calendared events, (FIS, USSA-Scored or Non-Scored), must be sanctioned by USSA through the normal sanctioning process. To qualify for USSA event liability insurance coverage, an event must be sanctioned by USSA and be administered and officiated by persons in such quantities, qualifications and job descriptions as established by applicable rules, mandates and procedures.
9. Rules for the conduct of USSA competitions are those of the ACR, except as specifically modified or added to by USSA to meet conditions in a specific area. “The FIS International Competition Regulations (ICR) and adjuncts shall govern any and all issues not addressed therein.” (USSA ACR)
10. USSA-calendared, internationally scored races are also calendared by the FIS. These FIS events are conducted according to FIS ICR rules and Precisions.
11. As required under the Ted Stevens Amateur Sports Act, as amended, and by the USSA Bylaws, USSA maintains an appeals procedure wherein an athlete, coach, official or administrator may appeal a specific decision made by a competition Jury or by the USSA. Any athlete, coach, official or administrator who feels they wish to appeal a decision should immediately contact USSA for procedures for filing such an appeal.

#### **UNITED STATES SKI TEAM**

The U.S. Ski Team (USST) is responsible for the final development and competition management of the very top competitors. The USST works closely with the USSA Education Department, which handles the coordination and administration of coaches’ education and training, and the USSA Sports Science Department.

The goals of the USST are to promote and expand the sport of ski racing in the U.S. and to achieve top results in international competition and consistently win World Cup and Olympic events.

#### **NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM**

The National Development System is a coordinated effort between USSA and the USST to provide a uniform system of training and competition at all levels through talent identification, training and appropriate competitions for age and ability levels.

The development concept consists of age group programs, which identify the best athletes at each level. These athletes are given access to regional and national training camps and possible selection to European races.

At every level, advancement is based on attitude, physical conditioning, current and previous seasons’ results, training and qualification camp progress, age/point standings and coaches’ evaluations. Outstanding performance will always warrant discretionary selection by the coaching staff. The program stresses winning at all levels.

#### **UNITED STATES DISABLED SKI TEAM**

Skiing for the disabled began as a rehabilitation/recreation program and has evolved into well-organized national and international competition with corresponding organizations to administer the sport. The USSA Committee for Disabled Skiers provides guidance and makes policy

recommendations concerning the U.S Disabled Ski Team (USDST) and disabled skiing in general. The USOC Committee on Sports for the Disabled also has input to the USDST.

In order to encourage disabled participation in regularly calendared USSA competitions, the Alpine Sport Committee adopted a special seeding rule. The "Golden Rule," named after the late Diana Golden, authorizes a special start order for disabled athletes with USSA points equal to or higher than a selected level within the normal USSA Points List. Please refer to the current edition of the Alpine Competition Guide for a full explanation of the seeding and start-position draw for disabled athletes according to the "Golden Rule." *The "Golden Rule" is for USSA sanctioned events only; there is no "Golden Rule" seeding at FIS events.*

At events for disabled competitors, the competitor's classification is based on disability and type of equipment required by the disability and competitors are seeded according to their type of disability and earned seed points. An explanation of the classification categories can be found in the current Alpine Competition Guide.

### **USSA COACHES EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

The USSA Coaches Education Department is the professional organization of ski coaches within USSA. It was founded to assist coaches in their efforts to improve the coaching and training offered to current and future athletes by making educational seminars/clinics, technical videos and publications available to its members. Through the USSA Alpine education and certification program, the Coaches Education Department is attempting to regulate and standardize coaching credentials and establish a reputation for excellence in coaching that gives its members a sense of pride.

The USSA Coaches Education Department handles the coordination and administration of coaches' training and education at all levels. The department works closely with volunteers to conduct existing programs and generate new programs and educational opportunities. USSA Coach's membership is required for, but does not guarantee, coaches' credentials and complimentary lift tickets at all USSA sanctioned events.

The USSA Coaches Education Department provides its members a challenging educational structure in conjunction with a national certification program. The program has been created to give guidance and accreditation to ski coaches in the U.S. who wish to educate themselves and promote the professional aspects of their coaching careers. The program provides a method by which qualified coaches are identified and assured of recognition for their expertise. This program provides a standardization of the goals and values of ski coaching and lays the groundwork for consistent and effective communication throughout the country. A description of the education/certification levels within the USSA Alpine skiing program is available upon request from the USSA Coaches Education Department: <http://www.ussa.org>.

## **ALPINE RACE SERIES**

FIS and USSA provide a complete calendar of competitions with opportunities for every level of competitor from the beginner to the Olympic champion. The top race series is the World Cup, although the individual events of the Olympic Winter Games and the World Championships may focus more attention on specific races. There is also an annual World Junior Alpine Championships.

The level of competition immediately below the World Cup is known as the Continental Cup. Continental Cups include Australia New Zealand Cup, Europa Cup, Far East Cup, Nor-Am Cup and South American Cup. These events attract the next tier of competitors and also many World Cup skiers. The Continental Cup series offers scoring opportunities for younger athletes.

Below the international level, there are many other scheduled events and series. Some of these races are calendared with FIS and provide access to the FIS Points List and ranking system. USST C and D Team members and top regional athletes participate in the National FIS Series. Each region of USSA conducts a number of events in this series according to international rules and standards. These events may be augmented by non-FIS events in the same series according to the needs of the regional program involved.

The USSA Junior Olympic Championships are the most important age group championships held in the United States each year. There are also special events or series for less-experienced competitors. These programs are planned, organized and conducted by regional, divisional and local committees, clubs and racing programs, within the general framework of USSA.

Each competition region of the United States offers other events according to the needs and resources of the various programs. For older age groups, there are events that are scored as part of the USSA Points System.

The USSA Youth Ski League is the junior entry-level competition program of USSA. USSA provides educational materials to these potential world-class skiers, and the program is designed to recruit and retain young skiers in the sport by emphasizing basic skills development, fun and family involvement.

USSA continues to offer programs for the Masters competitor. Information is available in the [Alpine Competition Guide](#) or from USSA.

## **FIS POINTS AND THE SEEDING LIST**

The FIS Points and Seeding List is a system that lists and ranks age-eligible competitors registered internationally and competing in FIS-calendared events. The list shows only those competitors who have been properly registered by their federations prior to the deadline for the particular list. Requirements for registration by an age-eligible athlete consist of an application for a FIS code designation, an Athlete's Declaration signed by both the competitor and, if necessary, parent/legal guardian (refer to laws of State in which competitor maintains legal residence concerning need for parent/legal guardian signature) and payment of the appropriate fee. All competitors in FIS events are required to have a FIS code designation.

Competitors are to be seeded with points as provided on the current list. If the current list is not correct, a letter confirming FIS points will only be issued by FIS and only at the request of USSA and payment of the required fee.

USSA age-eligible athletes who wish to compete in FIS events but do not wish to earn points may obtain a FIS Provisional/no-points inscription code. Contact USSA National Office for additional information.

Only FIS calendared events are scored to the FIS list. FIS results are valid for only 15 months.

At the 1996 FIS Congress in Christchurch, New Zealand, the Congress approved the introduction of the Integrated FIS List. This integration was further modified to allocate FIS Points between 0.00 and 5.99 to the top 30 competitors on the World Cup Start List (WCSL). The difference between the allocated FIS Points of these competitors is proportionate to the difference between their WCSL Points. The 31st ranked competitor has 6 points on the Integrated FIS List.

This change made the top 30 competitors of the WCSL and the FIS Points List the same. It also clearly defined the four-level structure, World Cup, Continental Cup, FIS races and Entry Level, through the use of category adders, (refer to Chapter IX - Timing and Calculations). Finally the FIS points are less compressed, without affecting the rankings.

### **USSA ATHLETE POINTS SYSTEM**

The USSA and FIS points systems are based on the same formula for scoring, and the top competitors in USSA will be ranked as the top USA competitors in the FIS Points List. The two lists differ in that they are produced on different schedules, which result in slight differences during a season. The FIS Points List is more selective than the USSA Points List because there are fewer races scored in the FIS system and because these races generally have restricted fields with various entry limits. FIS results for USSA-member athletes are scored to the USSA Points List.

The USSA Athlete Points System (APS) lists and ranks all age-eligible USSA competitor members, with the exception of Masters, who are properly registered prior to the deadline for the particular points list; Masters competitors have a separate ranking list which is used for seeding only at USSA Masters events. Student athletes are shown on the APS with an "S" and are seeded with 990 points. Any competitor whose name does not show on the current USSA Points List may be entered in USSA scored events upon completion of membership requirements. These competitors must be seeded with 990 points unless they have received a points confirmation from USSA. A letter confirming USSA points will only be issued to a competitor, their family or their coach provided that the competitor is in good standing and has paid the required fee.

Foreign athletes registered for the USSA Points List and competing in scored USSA events are shown with an "X". If these athletes have *no current* USSA Points but do have *current* FIS Points, they are to be seeded with their FIS Points. When applicable, their FIS Points are to be used in Penalty calculations. Foreign athletes registered in the USSA Points List who *do have current* USSA Points must be seeded with their USSA Points regardless of whether or not FIS Points are better; when applicable, FIS Points are used in Penalty calculations.

Foreign athletes who wish to compete in scored USSA events and who have *current* FIS inscription and Points but do not have *current* USSA membership and Points may do so after completing all USSA membership requirements. These competitors are seeded with their FIS Points; when applicable, their FIS Points are used in the Penalty calculations.

### **HOMOLOGATIONS AND COURSE APPROVALS**

All FIS races must be held on FIS homologated trails that have been inspected and approved - homologated - in advance of calendaring by members of the FIS Alpine Courses Committee.

The homologation process for FIS trails involves assembling a report on the technical aspects of the course prior to inspection by the FIS representative.

The purpose of the homologation and inspection is four-fold. First, the inspection guarantees that the course involved meets reasonable FIS standards when it is properly prepared and with on-hill "security/protection measures" in place according to the instructions of the inspector. The inspection confirms that the course meets the technical requirements as described in the report. The report itself provides valuable data to the FIS and is used to confirm that FIS races meet the required standards. Finally, the inspection offers the opportunity for a FIS expert to make suggestions to the ski area operator and race organizer regarding preparation and use of the facilities.

FIS Slalom (SL) and Giant Slalom (GS) courses must be reinspected every ten years and FIS Downhill (DH) and Super-G (SG) courses must be reinspected every five years to assure they meet current standards.

All courses, however, must be reinspected if major alterations are made in the course or related facilities or if there are changes in the regulations or technical requirements. A qualified person from outside the United States must inspect a new DH.

There are deadlines for submittal of requests for FIS homologation and submittal of completed reports. Ski areas and race organizers interested in pursuing FIS homologation should contact either the USSA National Office or the Chairman of the USSA Alpine Courses Working Group as listed in the current Alpine Competition Guide for details. Necessary forms and other information, including involved costs, will be provided. When initial paperwork is prepared, an inspector will be assigned and appointments will be made for the inspection. Following a satisfactory inspection and payment of the required fees, the USA representatives at the next meeting of the FIS Alpine Courses Committee will transmit the completed application to the FIS.

All non-scored USSA DH and SG events must be conducted on a certified or registered course. A registered course is one that does not meet the technical requirements (normally, lacking the specified vertical drop) but does comply with course setting and security regulations. An inspection and report are required.

All FIS homologated trails are automatically accepted as meeting USSA course approval standards, as are DH courses, which were previously homologated by FIS but now lack the necessary vertical drop due to FIS rules changes, provided USSA reinspection is current. Events run on these courses

must meet published minimum standards as outlined in the current Alpine Competition Guide in order to be scored in the USSA Points List.

USSA course approval or FIS homologation is required for all scored USSA DH and SG events. USSA DH and SG Schedule Agreements cannot be executed if the approval/homologation has not been completed or is not current for the course and discipline.

Both FIS and USSA DH and SG courses not reinspected by the end of the 5-year interval are dropped from both FIS and USSA listings of approved courses.

There is a deadline for submittal of requests for course homologation/approval, respective inspection and certification. Please contact the National Office or the Alpine Course Approval Chairman as listed in the current Alpine Competition Guide for more information concerning deadline for submittal of request and required fees.

**NOTE:** An Organizer should not depend entirely on the homologation of a course by the FIS and ignore exceptional snow and weather conditions, e.g. a DH course homologated by the FIS may be unsuitable for holding DH races when there is insufficient snow depth, unfavorable surface or sub-surface snow conditions or inclement weather conditions.